

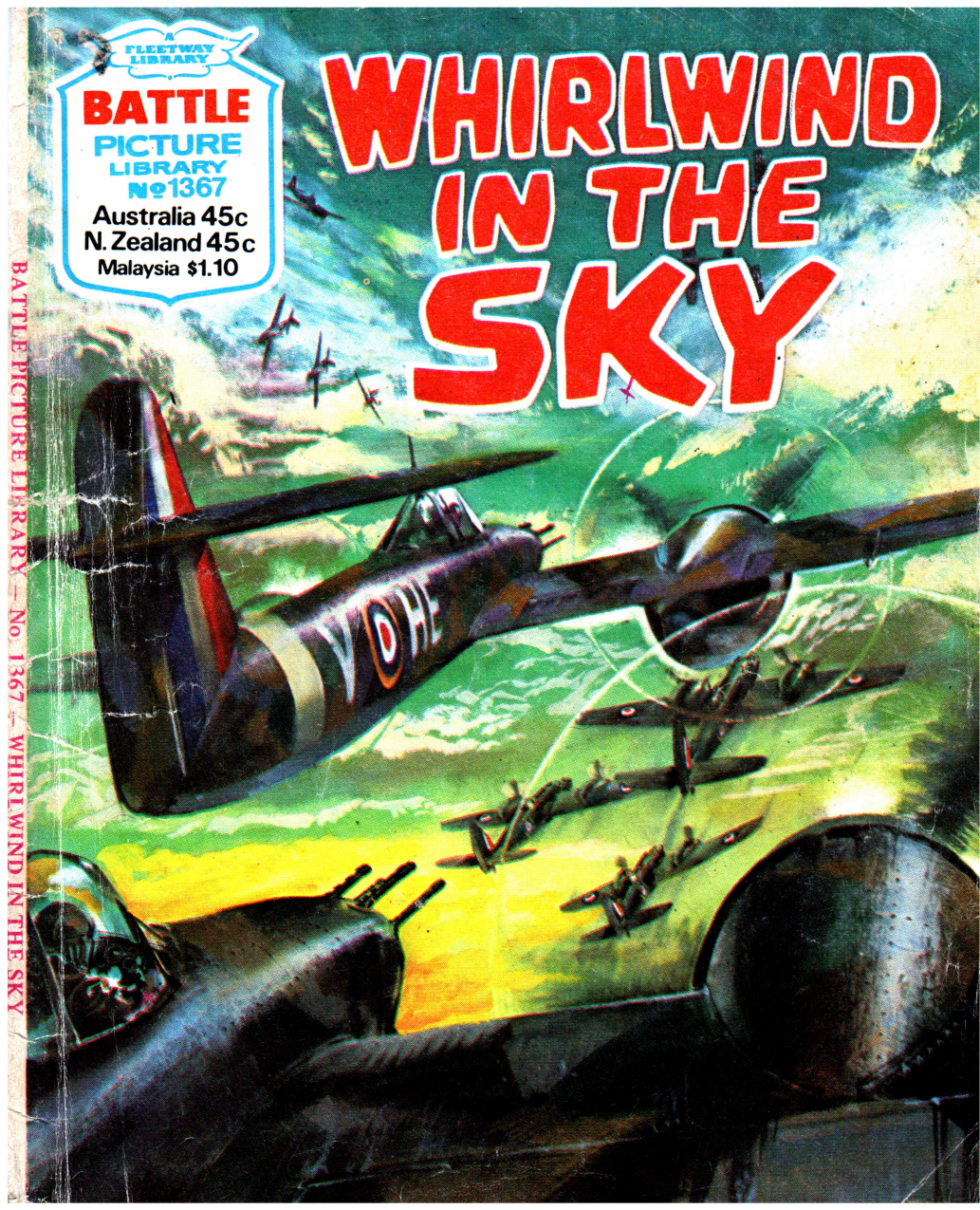
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WHIRLWIND IN THE SKY

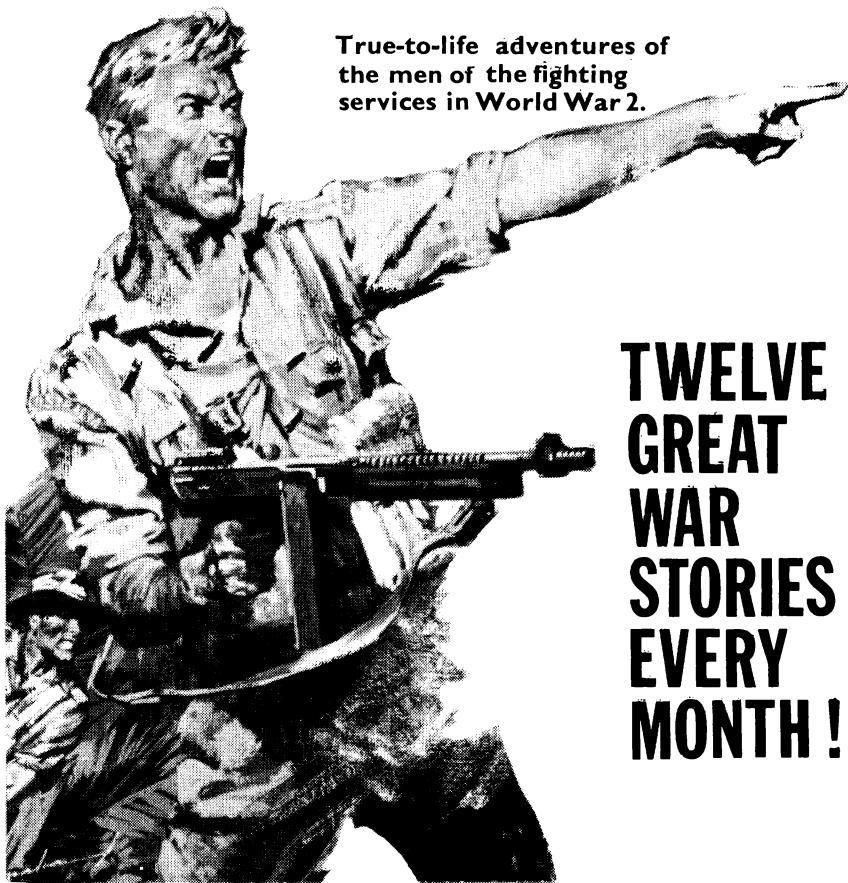
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WHIRLWIND *in* the Sky



THE WHIRLWIND WAS APTLY NAMED. LIKE A WINDSTORM IT LEFT A TRAIL OF TERROR AND DESTRUCTION WHEREVER IT WENT. WITH ITS HIGH SPEED, LONG RANGE, AND POWERFUL ARMAMENT IT WAS FAR IN ADVANCE OF ITS TIME. PERHAPS A LITTLE TOO FAR, FOR IT WAS HURRIED INTO SERVICE BEFORE IT HAD FULLY OVERCOME ITS TEETHING TROUBLES. IT WAS A PILOT'S DREAM AND A MECHANIC'S NIGHTMARE...

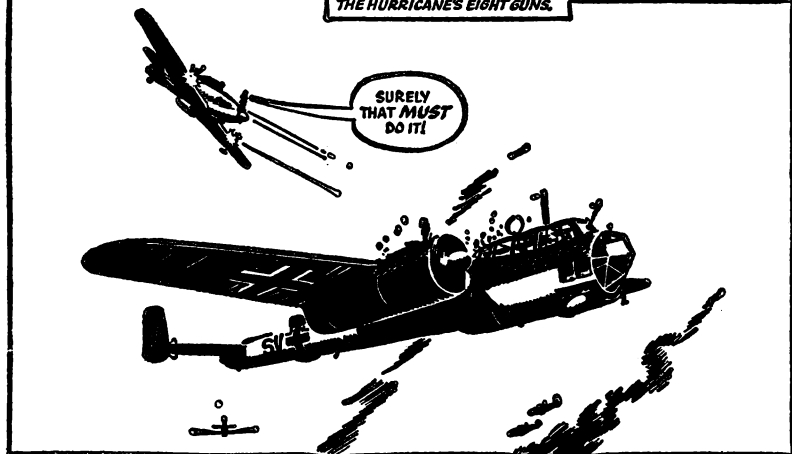
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Chapter 1. INTO ACTION

SPRING 1941. ENGLAND HAD SURVIVED THAT TERRIBLE WINTER WHEN HITLER SOUGHT TO BREAK THE PEOPLES SPIRIT BY MERCILESS BOMBING. LONDON, COVENTRY, AND MANY OTHER CITIES AND TOWNS LAY IN RUINS, BATTERED BUT UNDAUNTED, ENGLAND STOOD FIRM WHILE THE LUFTWAFFE SPENT ITSELF. NOW THE RAIDS HAD FIZZLED DOWN TO SNEAK ATTACKS, AND THE RAIDERS WERE SAVAGELY MAULED.



FLIGHT LIEUTENANT JOHNNY HAYNES HAD FOUGHT RIGHT THROUGH THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN, AND NOW KNOCKING DOWN BOMBERS WAS ROUTINE STUFF YET THIS PARTICULAR DORNIER REFUSED TO GO DOWN DESPITE REPEATED HAMMERINGS WITH THE HURRICANE'S EIGHT GUNS.



THE DORNIER VANISHED IN A SEARING FLASH AND THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION, AS HAYNES' BULLETS FOUND THE BOMB LOAD. THE HURRICANE WAS HURLED AWAY LIKE A LEAF BY THE TREMENDOUS BLAST.



Whirlwind In The Sky

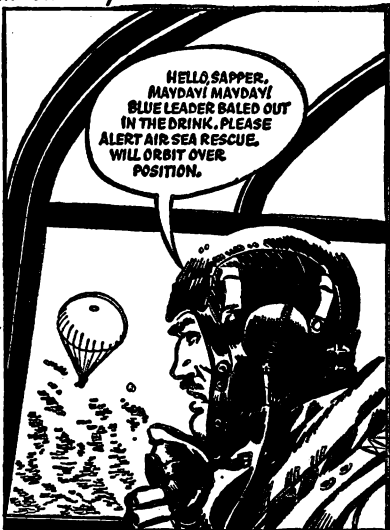
WHEN HAYNES BROUGHT THE REELING HURRICANE UNDER CONTROL, FLYING WRECKAGE FROM THE SHATTERED DORNIER HAD SMASHED INTO HIS ENGINE. THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO.

BLUE LEADER TO BLUE TWO. AM BALING OUT! WHISTLE UP THE BODY SHATCHERS.

ROGER, BLUE LEADER. I'LL HANG AROUND UNTIL THEY GET HERE.



HELLO, SAPPER. MAYDAY! MAYDAY! BLUE LEADER BALED OUT IN THE DRINK. PLEASE ALERT AIR-SEA RESCUE. WILL ORBIT OVER POSITION.



TELEPHONES HUMMED, AND WITHIN MINUTES THE RESCUE MACHINERY SNAPPED INTO ACTION.

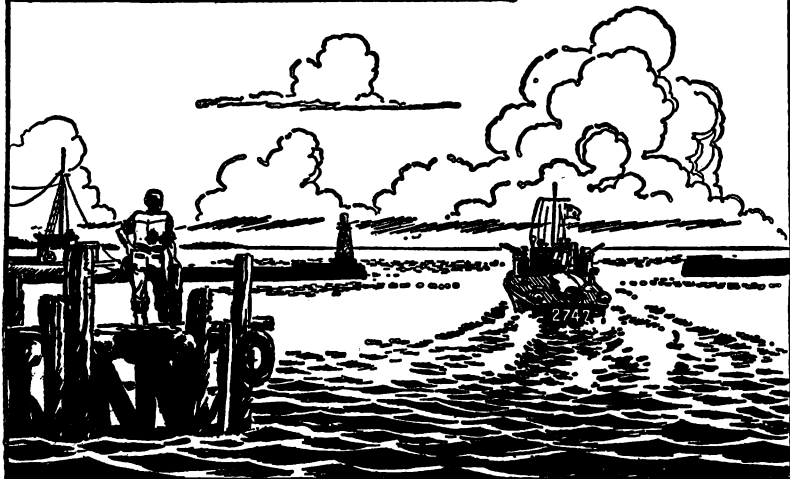
COME ON, YOU LAYABOUTS. MOVE! GET THOSE LINES CAST OFF!



Whirlwind In The Sky

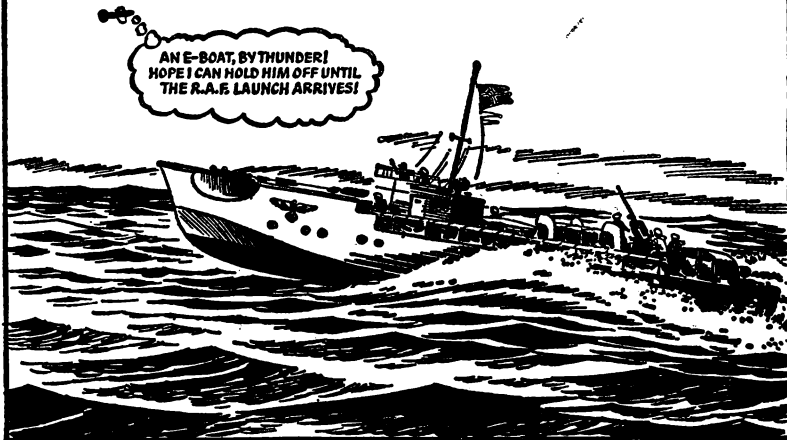
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EACH MAN SPRANG TO HIS POST, AND SOON THE SWIFT LAUNCH SWEEPED OUT OF THE LITTLE HARBOUR AND SPED ON ITS ERRAND OF MERCY.



BUT A PROWLING E-BOAT HAD SEEN THE HURRICANE GO DOWN, AND MADE FOR THE SCENE, EAGER FOR A PRISONER. IT WAS A RACE, WITH A MAN'S FREEDOM AS THE PRIZE.

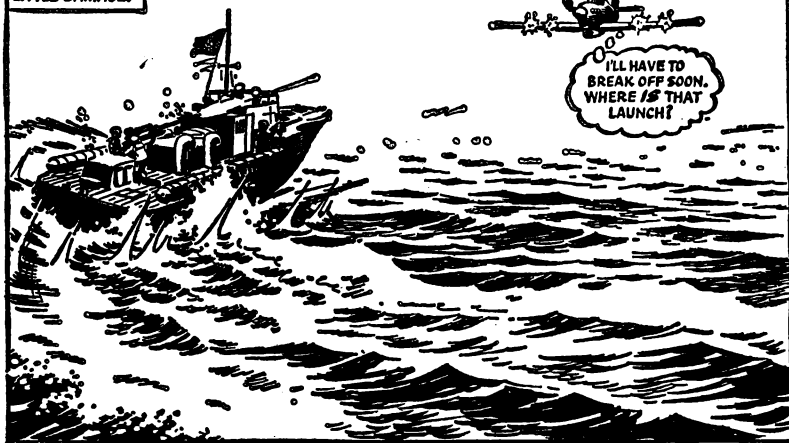
AN E-BOAT, BY THUNDER!
HOPE I CAN HOLD HIM OFF UNTIL
THE R.A.F. LAUNCH ARRIVES!



Whirlwind In The Sky



THE E-BOAT CAPTAIN HAD GUESSED RIGHT, HE AND HIS CREW WERE VETERANS. EACH TIME THE FIGHTER SWEEP IN WITH GUNS CHATTERING, THE SLEEK GREY SHAPE TWISTED LIKE AN EEL OUT OF THE HAIL OF LEAD, AND THOSE BULLETS WHICH STRUCK DID LITTLE DAMAGE.



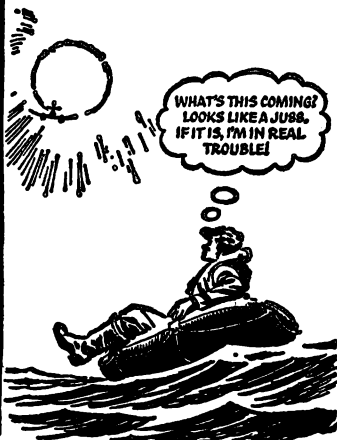
Whirlwind In The Sky

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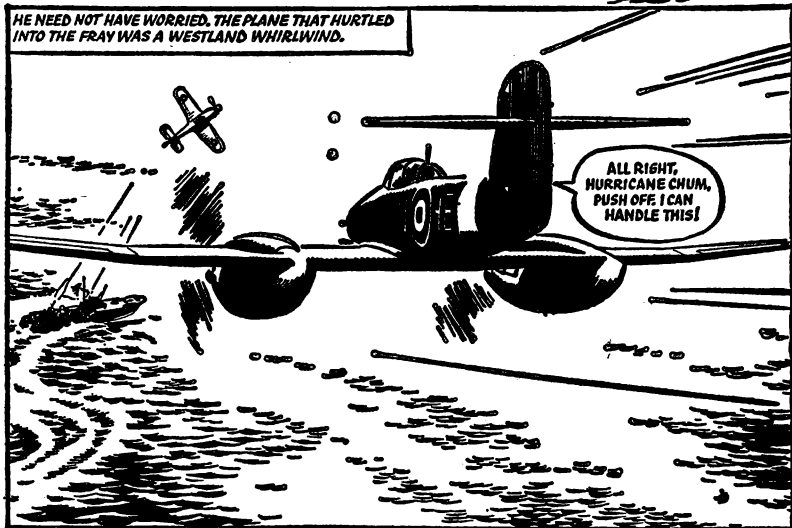
THE RESCUE LAUNCH, ITS THREE GREAT ENGINES BELLOWING AT FULL THROTTLE, WAS CLOSING THE BAR. BUT IT WOULD BE TOUGH AND GO!



HAYNES, WATCHING FROM HIS PRECARIOUS SEAT IN THE DINGHY, ALSO SPOTTED THE TWIN ENGINE PLANE STREAKING IN ALMOST AT SEA LEVEL.

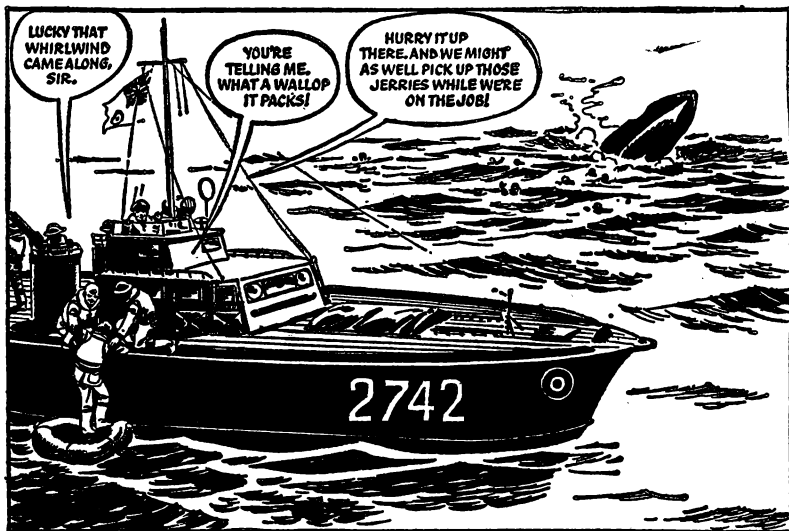
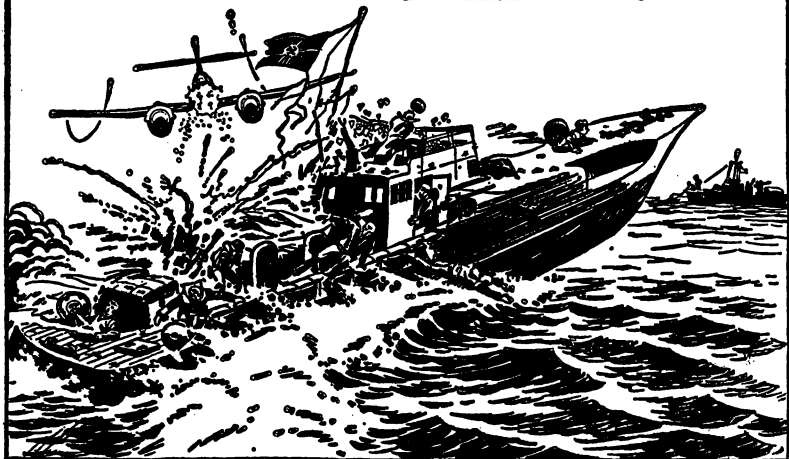


HE NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED, THE PLANE THAT HURTLING INTO THE FRAY WAS A WESTLAND WHIRLWIND.



Whirlwind In The Sky

THE WHIRLWIND'S FOUR CANNONS SPAT A BATTERING
RAIN OF SCREAMING STEEL WHICH RIPPED OPEN THE
E-BOAT LIKE AN OLD TIN CAN!



THE SHAKEN AND BEDRAGGLED E-BOAT CREW WERE HAULED ABOARD AND THE LAUNCH TURNED FOR HOME. HAYNES WATCHED THE SLENDER SHAPE OF THE WHIRLWIND AS IT DIPPED ITS WINGS IN FAREWELL AND SPED AWAY.

WHAT A PLANE! THAT SETTLES IT!
I'M GOING TO GET IN A WHIRLWIND
SQUADRON!



BACK AT HIS UNIT, HAYNES WASTED NO TIME IN APPLYING FOR A TRANSFER.

THIS IS VERY
SUDDEN, HAYNES.
WHY A WHIRLWIND
SQUADRON? I'VE HEARD
THEIR ACCIDENT RATE
IS PRETTY HIGH.



I DON'T THINK
IT'S ALL THE AIRCRAFT'S
FAULT, SIR. AFTER WHAT
I SAW FROM THAT DINGHY
I KNOW IT'S THE PLANE FOR ME.
IRRESPECTIVE OF THE RUMOURS.
YOU MAY THINK I'M MAD,
BUT SOMEHOW I'VE JUST
GOT TO FLY THAT
PLANE!

Whirlwind In The Sky

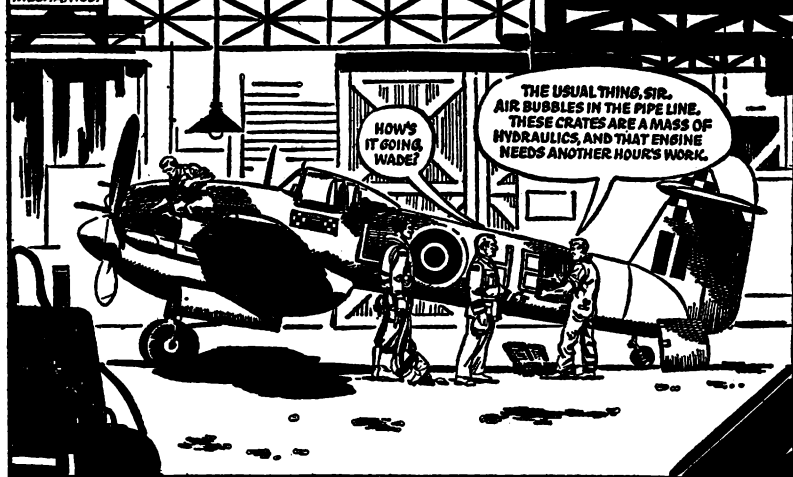


THE TRANSFER WAS APPROVED, AND HAYNES WASTED NO TIME IN MAKING HIS WAY TO EXETER, WHERE HIS NEW WHIRLWIND SQUADRON WAS STATIONED. AFTER REPORTING, HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE MESS TO FIND A PARTY IN FULL SWING.

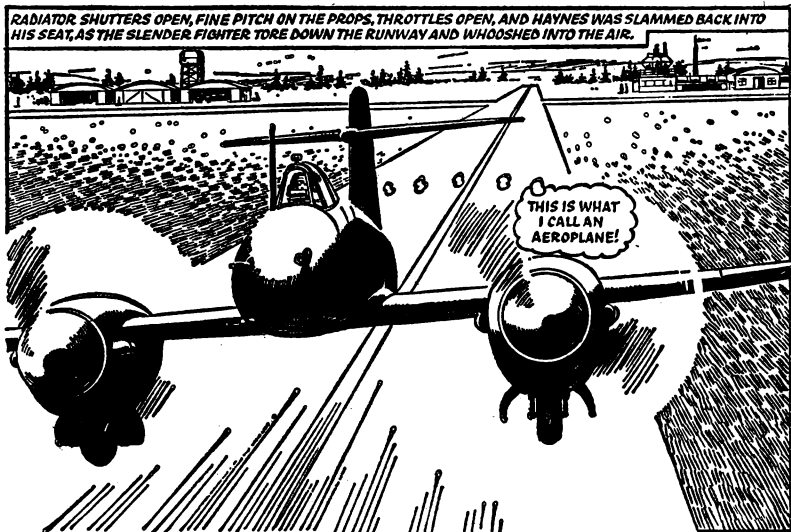
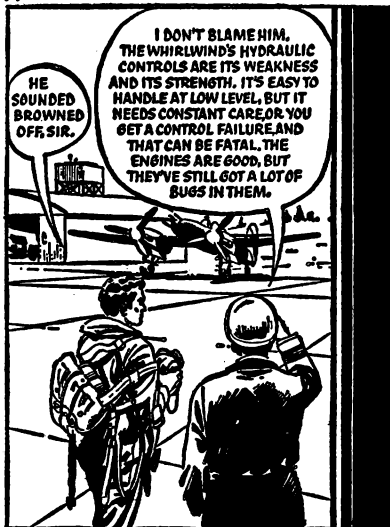


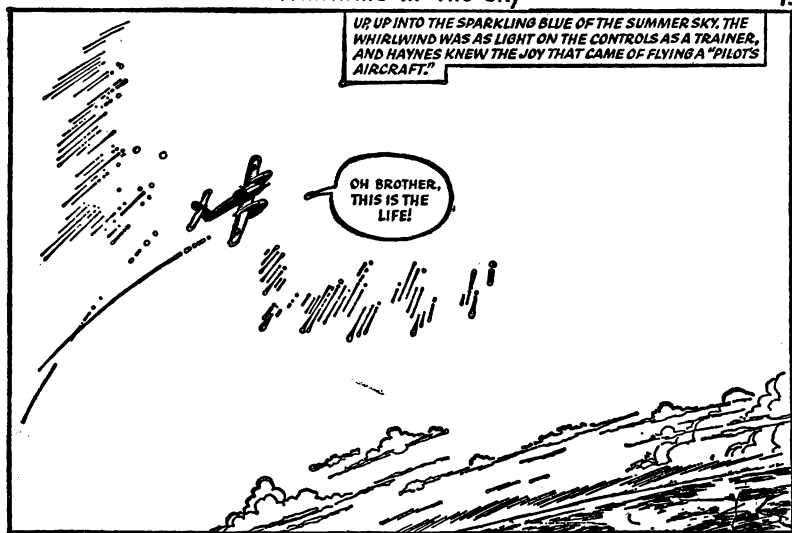


HAYNES LEARNED THAT THE WHIRLWINDS WERE DIFFICULT TO SERVICE. AT THE HANGARS NEXT MORNING HE JOINED THE C.O. TALKING TO DISORIENTED MECHANICS.



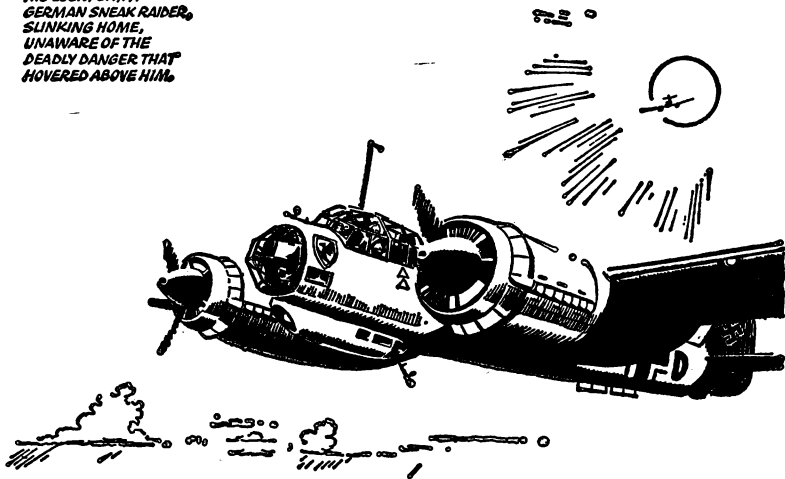
Whirlwind In The Sky



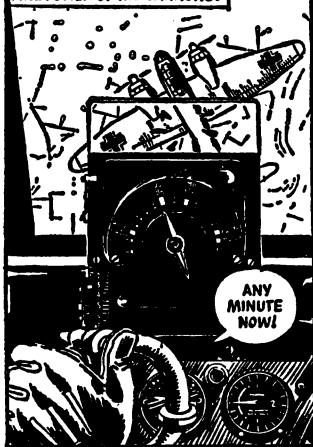


Whirlwind In The Sky

THIS WAS CERTAINLY
HIS LUCKY DAY. A
GERMAN SNEAK RAIDER,
SLINKING HOME,
UNAWARE OF THE
DEADLY DANGER THAT
HOVERED ABOVE HIM.



STREAKING DOWN OUT OF THE SUN, HAYNES
TOOK THE UNSUSPECTING JUNKERS IN HIS
SIGHTS. HIS HAND HOVERED ON THE BUTTON
THAT WOULD SHORTLY UNLEASH THE TERRIFIC
FIRE POWER OF HIS CANNONS.



SUDDENLY, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST
WARNING, HIS STARBOARD ENGINE
SHUDDERED AND GROUND TO A STANDSTILL.



Whirlwind In The Sky

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REACTING LIKE LIGHTNING, HAYNES CUT THE PETROL TO THE DUD ENGINE AND THE SMOKE DIED AWAY. HE COULD ONLY CURSE IMPOTENTLY AS THE JUNKERS CONTINUED SERENELY ON ITS WAY, OBVIOUS OF ITS LUCKY ESCAPE.

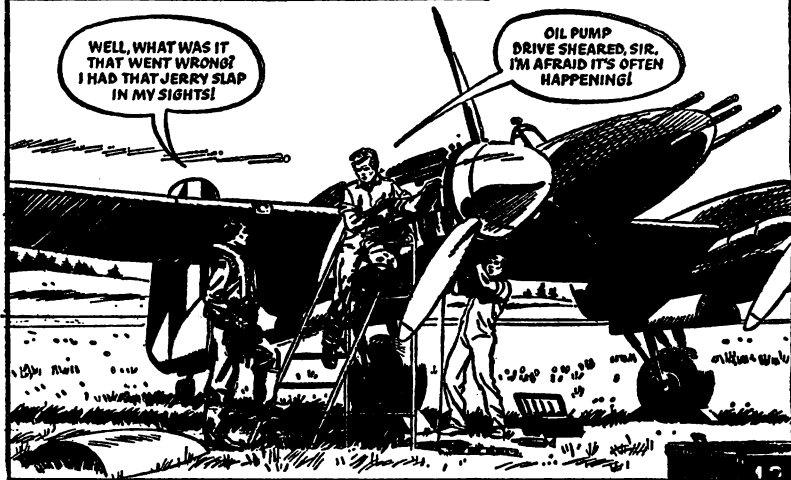
OF ALL THE LOUSY, ROTTEN LUCK!



STILL FUMING, HE NURSED HIS SICK AIRCRAFT BACK TO BASE, AND STOOD ANGRILY BY, WHILE THE MECHANICS FOUND THE TROUBLE.

WELL, WHAT WAS IT THAT WENT WRONG? I HAD THAT JERRY SLAP IN MY SIGHTS!

OIL PUMP DRIVE SHEARED, SIR. I'M AFRAID IT'S OFTEN HAPPENING!



Whirlwind In The Sky

AS HIS ANGER COOLED, HAYNES REMEMBERED THAT THE "PEREGRINE" WAS A BRAND NEW ENGINE, DEVELOPED ESPECIALLY FOR THE WHIRLWIND. TEETHING TROUBLES WERE TO BE EXPECTED.

IT'S THE SAME ALL THE TIME. SOMETHING ALWAYS GOING WRONG. WE'RE ALL A BIT FED UP WITH IT. I THINK THE KITES A WASHOUT

ROT! IF WE LEARN THE PLANE INSIDE OUT, AND THE ERKS DO THEIR STUFF, THERE ISN'T A JERRY AIRCRAFT TO TOUCH US FOR SPEED AND FIRE-POWER!



THE C.O. ENTERED AT THAT MOMENT, AND HEARD HAYNES' HEATED REMARK.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT, HAYNES. YOU OTHER BODS WOULD DO WELL TO GET IN SOME PRACTICE FBPS. INSTEAD OF SITTING HERE BINDING. I'M JUST OFF TO GROUP. IT SEEMS THERE'S A BIG SHOW COMING OFF SHORTLY. WE'RE AT STAND-BY AS OF NOW, ALL LEAVE CANCELLED!

SPURRED BY THE C.O.'S HINT AND HAYNES' ENTHUSIASM, THEY SPENT THE REST OF THE DAY CHECKING AND TESTING THEIR MACHINES DOWN TO THE LAST SPLIT PIN.



WHAT'S GOING ON, WADE? WHY ALL THE FLAP?

THEY'VE BEEN AT IT SINCE YOU LEFT, SIR. NONE OF THEM WANTS TO BE LEFT OUT OF WHATEVER'S BREWING.

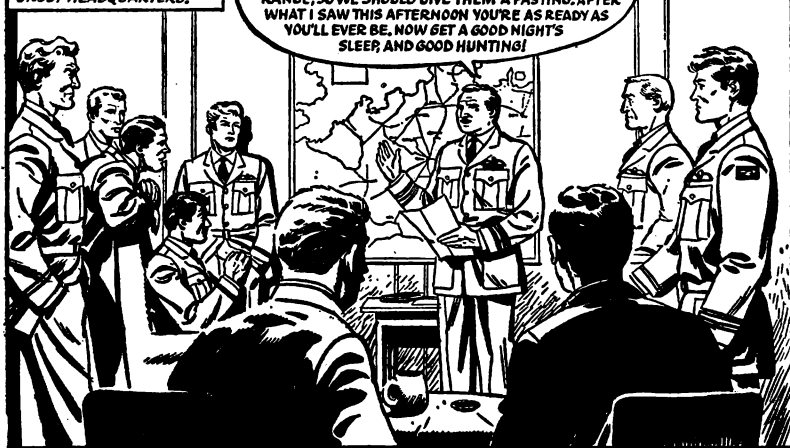
IN THE MESS THAT NIGHT, THE C.O. SENSED AN ATMOSPHERE OF CONTENT THAT HAD BEEN SADLY LACKING IN RECENT MONTHS.



THE LADS ARE ON FORM TONIGHT, SIR. HAVEN'T HAD A PARTY LIKE THIS FOR A LONG TIME.

YES, THAT MAD KEEN YOUNG HAYNES HAS WORKED WONDERS. THEY'VE GOT CONFIDENCE IN THE WHIRLWIND NOW. AND THEY'LL NEED IT FOR TOMORROW'S SHOW!

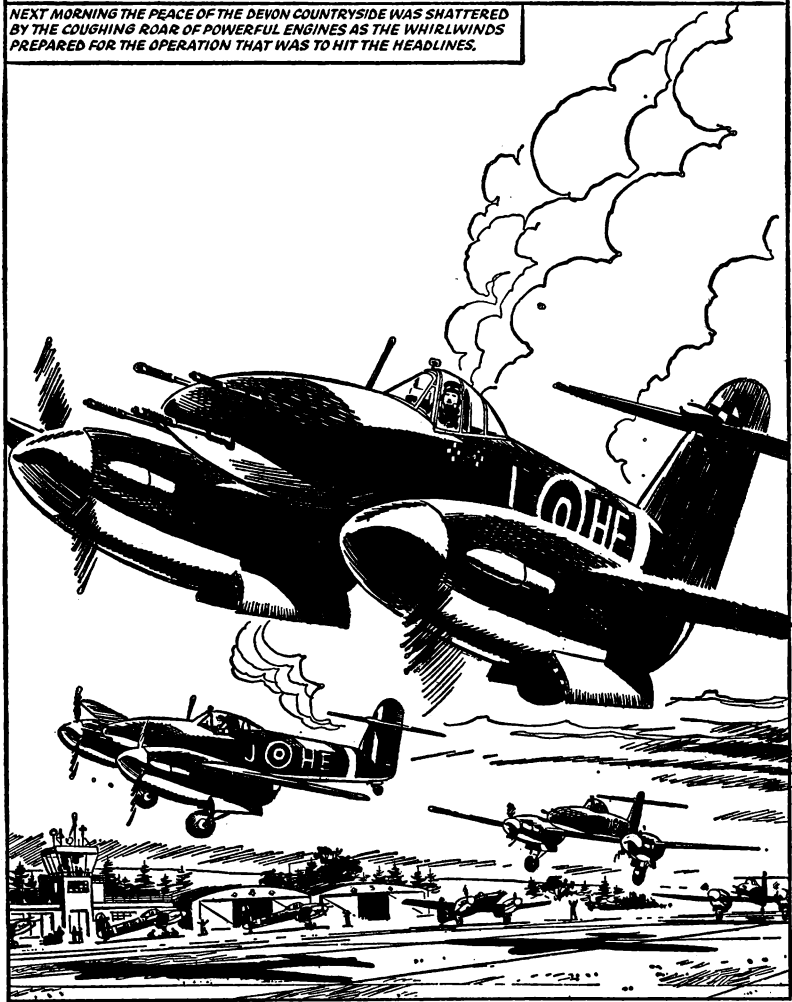
BEFORE THE PARTY GOT TOO HILARIOUS, THE C.O. CALLED FOR SILENCE AND TOLD THEM WHAT HE HAD LEARNED AT GROUP HEADQUARTERS.



TOMORROW SIX SQUADRONS OF BLENHEIMS ARE GOING TO ATTACK THE COLOGNE POWER STATIONS, AND WE'RE GOING TO ESCORT THEM. THE JERRY FIGHTERS WON'T BE EXPECTING FIGHTER ESCORT AT THAT LONG RANGE, SO WE SHOULD GIVE THEM A PASTING. AFTER WHAT I SAW THIS AFTERNOON YOU'RE AS READY AS YOU'LL EVER BE. NOW GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP, AND GOOD HUNTING!

Chapter 2. **BATTERED** but **TRIUMPHANT**

NEXT MORNING THE PEACE OF THE DEVON COUNTRYSIDE WAS SHATTERED BY THE COUGHING ROAR OF POWERFUL ENGINES AS THE WHIRLWINDS PREPARED FOR THE OPERATION THAT WAS TO HIT THE HEADLINES.



QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY THE FIGHTERS TURNED ON TO THE RUNWAY AND SWEEP INTO THE AIR. BUT MISFORTUNE STRUCK KENDALL, NEAR THE END OF THE LINE.

OH, NO!
EVERYTHING
HAPPENS
TO ME.



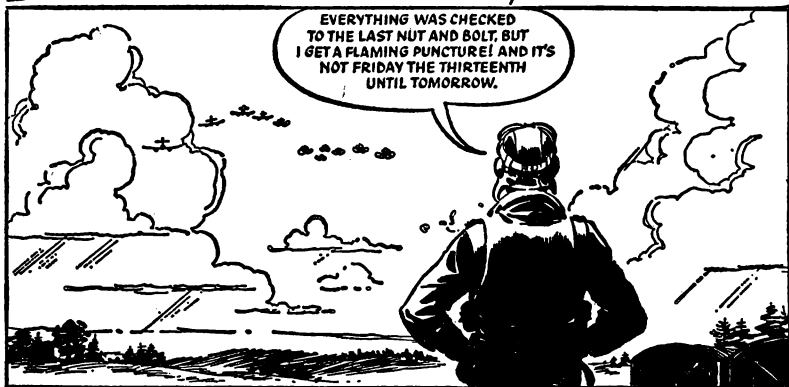
THE LAME DUCK WAS DRAGGED CLEAR AND THE TAKE-OFFS RESUMED.

CAN'T YOU
CHANGE THE
WHEEL?

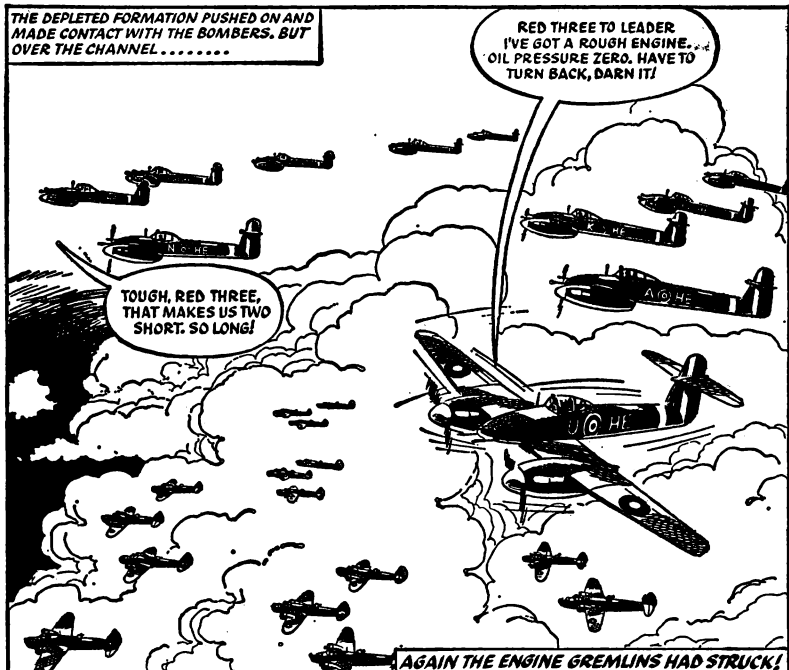
OF COURSE WE CAN, SIR.
BUT IT'LL TAKE US TWO HOURS,
AND WE'LL NEED THE CRANE.



Whirlwind In The Sky



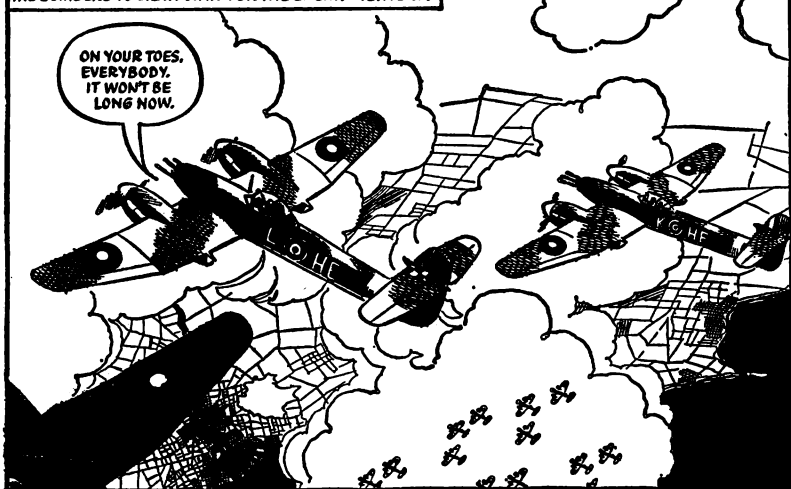
THE DEPLETED FORMATION PUSHED ON AND MADE CONTACT WITH THE BOMBERS. BUT OVER THE CHANNEL.....



Whirlwind In The Sky

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AS THEY CROSSED THE COAST, THE WHIRLWINDS CLIMBED HIGH ABOVE THE BOMBERS TO LIE IN WAIT FOR THE ENEMY FIGHTERS.

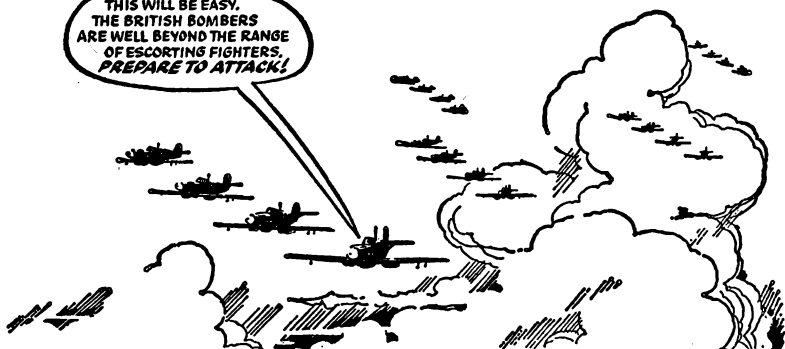


WORD OF THE APPROACHING ARMADA FLASHED TO THE NAZI FIGHTER AIRFIELDS, AND DAIMLER-BENZ ENGINES BLASTED INTO LIFE AS THE LUFTWAFFE TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE.



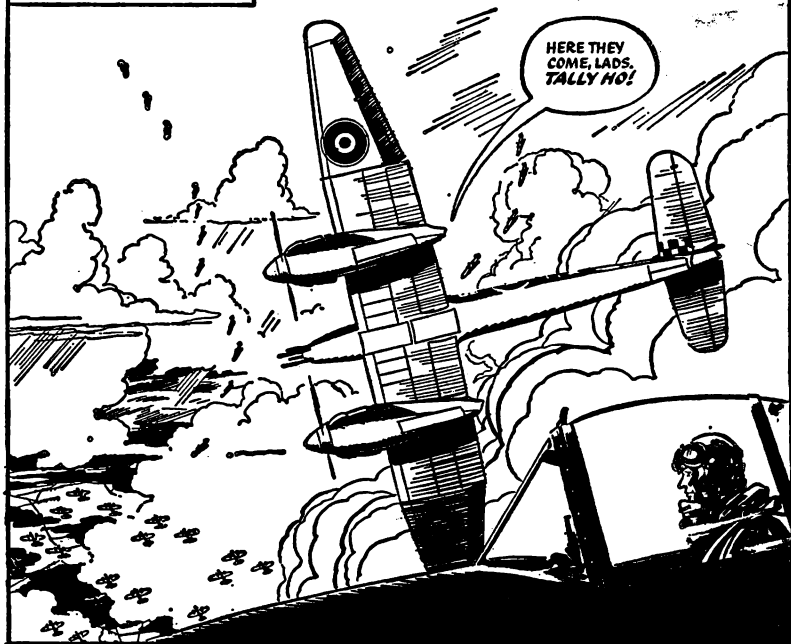
Whirlwind In The Sky

THIS WILL BE EASY.
THE BRITISH BOMBERS
ARE WELL BEYOND THE RANGE
OF ESCORTING FIGHTERS.
PREPARE TO ATTACK!

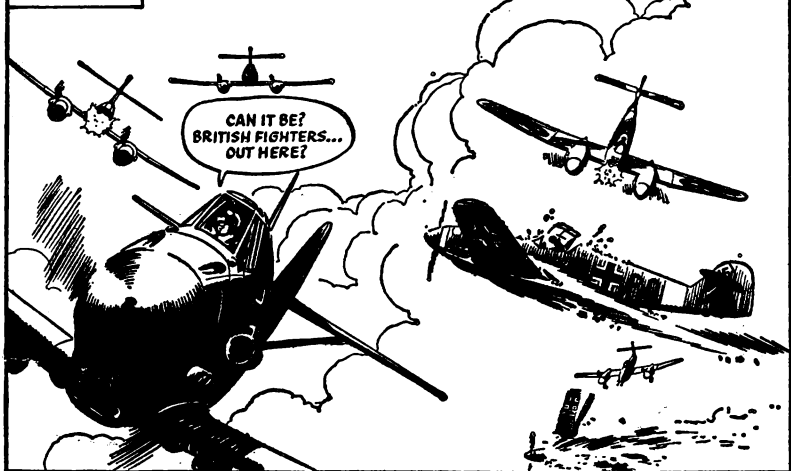


LIKE VULTURES, THE MESSERSCHMITTS SWOOPED ON THE LUMBERING BOMBERS. THIS WAS THE CUE FOR THE WHIRLWINDS, LURKING UP SUN.

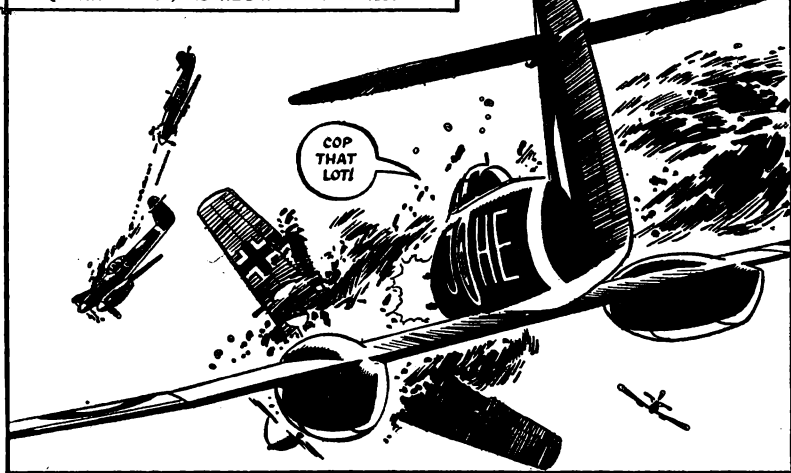
HERE THEY
COME, LADS.
TALLY HO!



ENGINES YOWLING AT FULL BOOST, THE WHIRLWINDS WADED IN. AT ONCE THE SKY WAS AN INFERNO OF SNARLING CANNONS AND MACHINE GUNS.

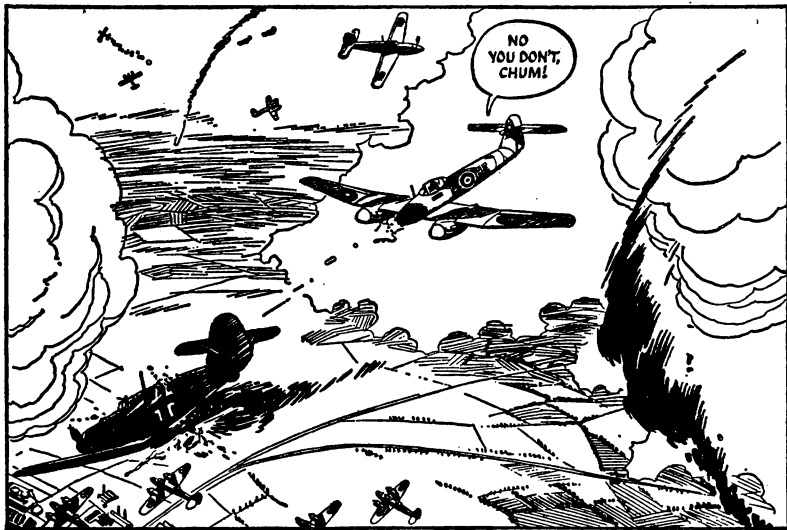
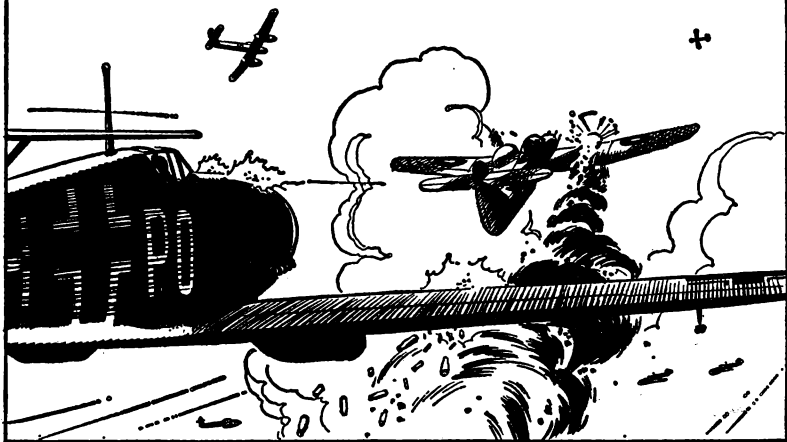


MOMENTARILY CAUGHT ON THE WRONG FOOT, THE GERMANS WERE BADLY SHAKEN BY THE FIRST FIERCE ONSLAUGHT, BUT THEY QUICKLY RALLIED, AND THE BATTLE WAS JOINED.



Whirlwind In The Sky

THE WHIRLWINDS' TREMENDOUS FIRE POWER WROUGHT HAVOC, BUT THE MESSERSCHMITTS HAD THE EDGE OF MANOEUVRABILITY.



Whirlwind In The Sky

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HAYNES SPOTTED
THE DANGER TO THE
LEADER AND YELLED
A WARNING...



LOOK OUT,
LEADER!
BANDIT ON
YOUR TAIL!

THE C.O. REACTED QUICKLY,
BUT NOT QUICKLY ENOUGH.
THE GERMAN'S BURST
SLASHED HIS TAIL TO
RIBBONS.



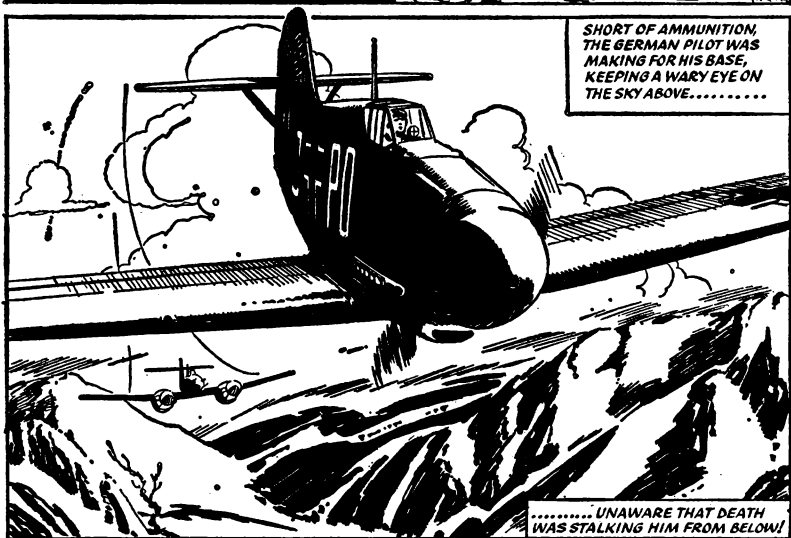
BALING OUT!
GET THAT PERISHER.
SEE YOU AFTER
THE WAR.

Whirlwind In The Sky

PUSHING HIS THROTTLES WIDE, HAYNES ROARED AWAY IN PURSUIT OF THE MESSERSCHMITT, BENT ON REVENGE.



SHORT OF AMMUNITION, THE GERMAN PILOT WAS MAKING FOR HIS BASE, KEEPING A WARY EYE ON THE SKY ABOVE.....



..... UNAWARE THAT DEATH WAS STALKING HIM FROM BELOW!

Whirlwind In The Sky

29

WITH ITS POWER ASSISTED CONTROLS, THE WHIRLWIND WAS IN ITS ELEMENT AT LOW LEVEL. BUT HAYNES KNEW THAT IF HE WAS SPOTTED, THE GERMAN COULD ESCAPE BY VIRTUE OF SUPERIOR SPEED.

**JUST A LITTLE NEARER!
I ONLY HOPE HE DOESN'T
LOOK DOWN.**

SOME SIXTH SENSE WARNED THE GERMAN PILOT.....TOO LATE! HE SLAMMED OPEN HIS THROTTLE, BUT THE SCREAMING CONE OF SHELLS CHEWED HIS PLANE IN HALF!

Whirlwind In The Sky

TURNING AWAY, HAYNES HEADED TO JOIN UP WITH THE RETURNING BOMBERS. FLAK HAD TAKEN ITS TOLL, BUT THEIR MISSION WAS ACCOMPLISHED.



COMPELLED BY HIS CRISP COMMANDS THE OTHERS SORTED THEMSELVES OUT AND HAYNES WAS ABLE TO COUNT THE LOSSES.



AUGUST 12TH, 1941, WOULD GO DOWN IN THE HISTORY OF THE WAR AS THE DAY THE LUFTWAFFE GOT ONE OF ITS WORST THRASHINGS AT THE HANDS OF FIGHTER COMMAND SINCE THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN. BATTERED BUT TRIUMPHANT, THE WHIRLWINDS AND BLENHEIMS HEADED FOR HOME.

THIS IS WHERE WE LEAVE YOU, CHEERIO!

THANK YOU FOR THE PROTECTION! GOOD HUNTING!

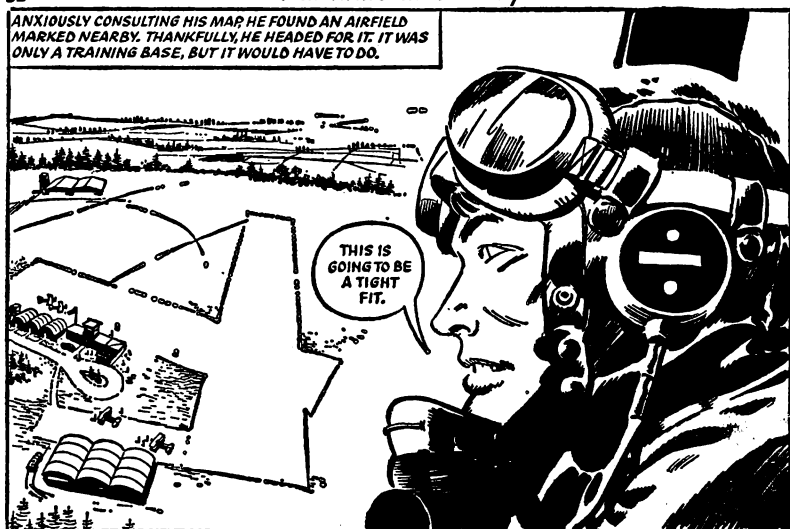


JUST THEN HAYNES' FUEL WARNING LIGHT FLASHED. HIS LONE ESCAPE OVER GERMANY HAD USED A LOT OF FUEL. HE HAD TO GET DOWN QUICKLY.

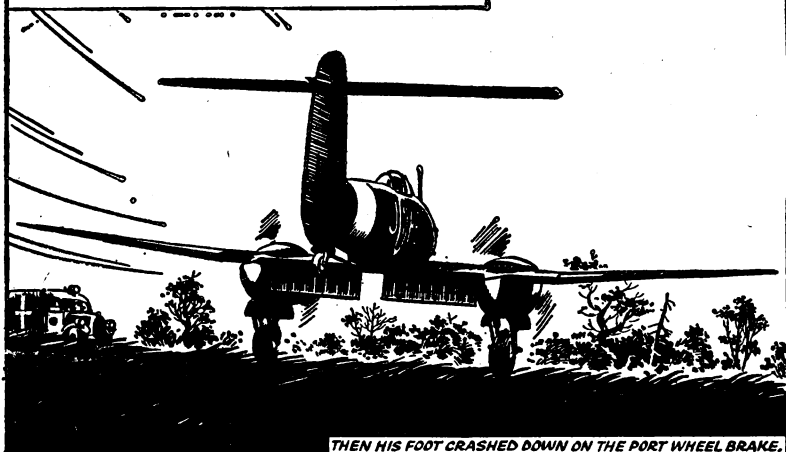
TAKE OVER, BLUE LEADER. I'M OUT OF JUICE.



ANXIOUSLY CONSULTING HIS MAP HE FOUND AN AIRFIELD MARKED NEARBY. THANKFULLY, HE HEADED FOR IT. IT WAS ONLY A TRAINING BASE, BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO DO.

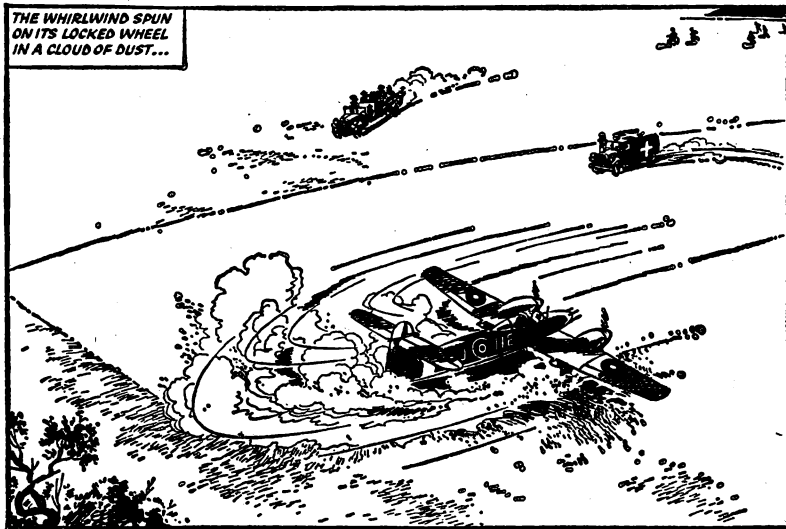


DUE TO ITS HIGH LANDING SPEED, THE WHIRLWIND NEEDED A LONG RUNWAY. BUT THIS WAS NO TIME TO BE CHOOSY. HAYNES KNEW WHAT HE WAS ABOUT. AS THE PLANE HURTLED ALONG THE RUNWAY, HE WATCHED THE HEDGE LOOM NEARER.... NEARER.....



THEN HIS FOOT CRASHED DOWN ON THE PORT WHEEL BRAKE.

THE WHIRLWIND SPIN ON ITS LOCKED WHEEL IN A CLOUD OF DUST...



Whirlwind In The Sky

THANKFUL THAT DISASTER HAD BEEN
AVERTED, THE RESCUERS HELPED A SHAKEN
BUT GRINNING HAYNES FROM THE PLANE.

THAT WAS A
NEAT PIECE OF WORK.
YOU OBVIOUSLY KNOW
HOW TO HANDLE
THESE KITES.

THAT, PLUS GOOD LUCK
AND HYDRAULIC BRAKES.
NOW IF YOU'LL CHASE THESE
TRAINEE BIRDMEN AWAY,
I'LL SEE ABOUT SOME
JUICE.



BACK AT EXETER, HAYNES FOUND THE SQUADRON IN HIGH SPIRITS
THOUGH SADDENED BY THE LOSS OF THEIR C.O. AND THE OTHERS.

MESSAGE FROM
GROUP SIR.
YOU'RE TO REPORT
THERE FIRST
THING IN THE
MORNING.

WONDER WHAT
I'VE DONE NOW?

BET YOU GET THE
SQUADRON, JOHN.

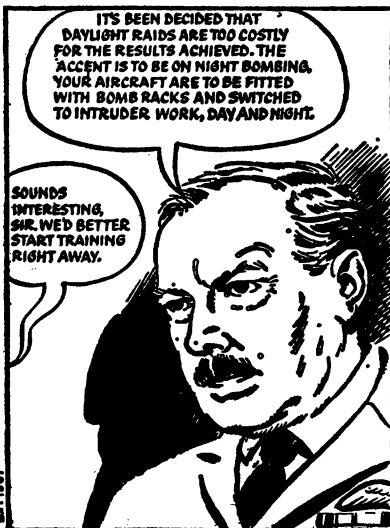


THE PROPHECY PROVED CORRECT. HAYNES LEARNED THAT HE WAS PROMOTED TO SQUADRON-LEADER AND WOULD ASSUME COMMAND AT ONCE.



IT'S BEEN DECIDED THAT DAYLIGHT RAIDS ARE TOO COSTLY FOR THE RESULTS ACHIEVED. THE ACCENT IS TO BE ON NIGHT BOMBING. YOUR AIRCRAFT ARE TO BE FITTED WITH BOMB RACKS AND SWITCHED TO INTRUDER WORK, DAY AND NIGHT.

SOUNDS INTERESTING, SIR. WE'D BETTER START TRAINING RIGHT AWAY.



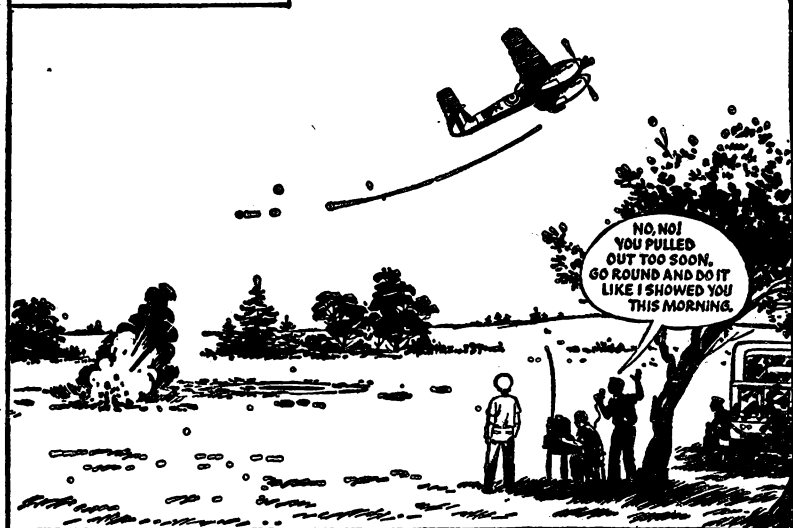
THE SOONER THE BETTER. I WANT YOU TO COMMENCE OPERATIONS IN TWO WEEKS TIME. CAN YOU MANAGE THAT?

YOU BET WE CAN, SIR! GOODBYE AND THANKS.



Whirlwind In The Sky

THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED WERE HECTIC. THERE WAS A LOT TO LEARN. HAYNES KEPT THE SQUADRON AND HIMSELF AT IT FROM DAWN TO DUSK.



EVEN AT NIGHT THE TRAINING WENT ON. HAYNES HIMSELF WAS FIRST AT EVERY PRACTICE.



Whirlwind In The Sky

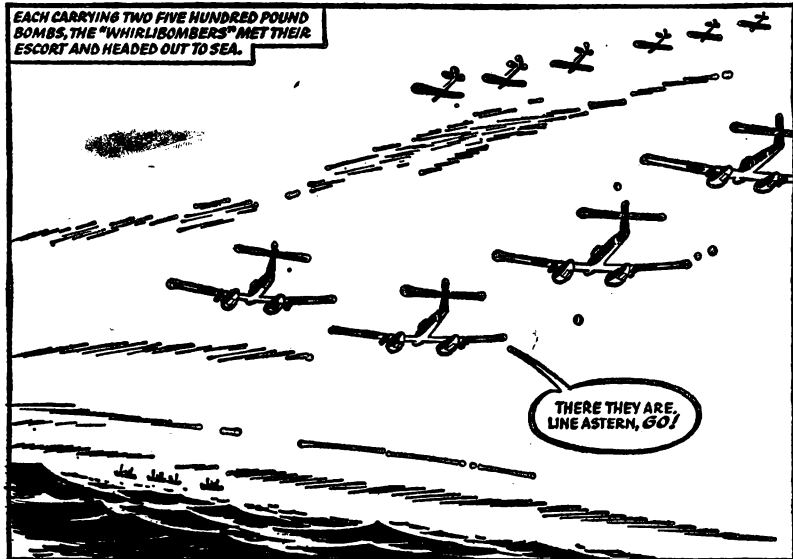
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BEFORE THE FORTNIGHT WAS UP, HAYNES WAS SATISFIED THAT HIS SQUADRON WAS READY FOR THEIR NEW TASK. FOR A "TRIAL RUN" THEY WERE GIVEN A SMALL SHIPPING STRIKE.

THIS IS PURELY A TRY-OUT. THAT'S WHY ONLY TWO SECTIONS ARE GOING. FOUR ENEMY ARMED TRAWLERS HAVE BEEN SPOTTED OFF CHERBOURG, SO THAT'S ONE EACH. WE'LL HAVE SPITFIRE COVER IN CASE THE LUFTWAFFE TRIES TO INTERFERE.

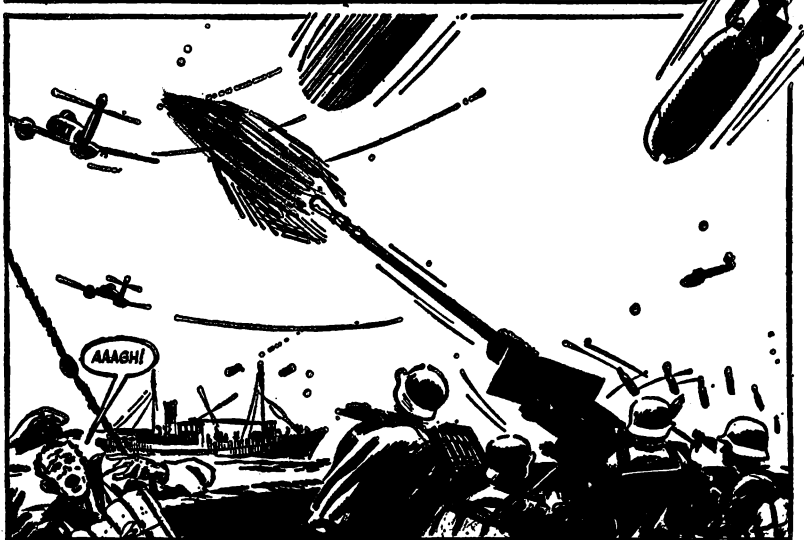
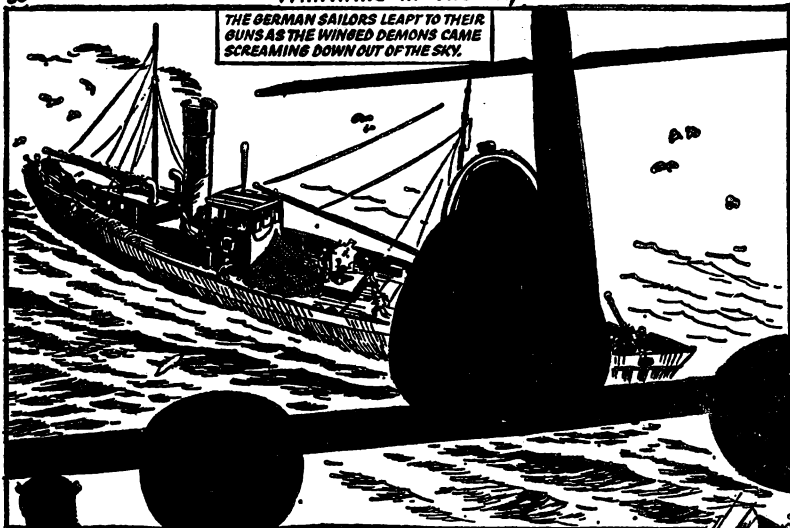


EACH CARRYING TWO FIVE HUNDRED POUND BOMBS, THE "WHIRLWIND BOMBERS" MET THEIR ESCORT AND HEADED OUT TO SEA.

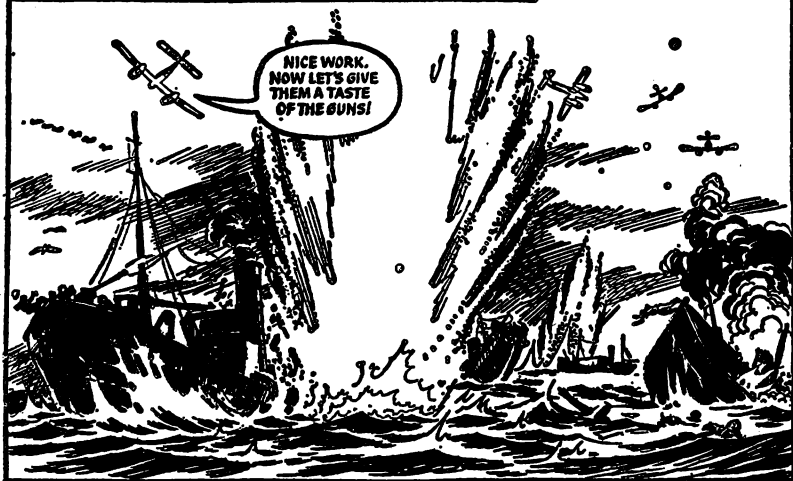


Whirlwind In The Sky

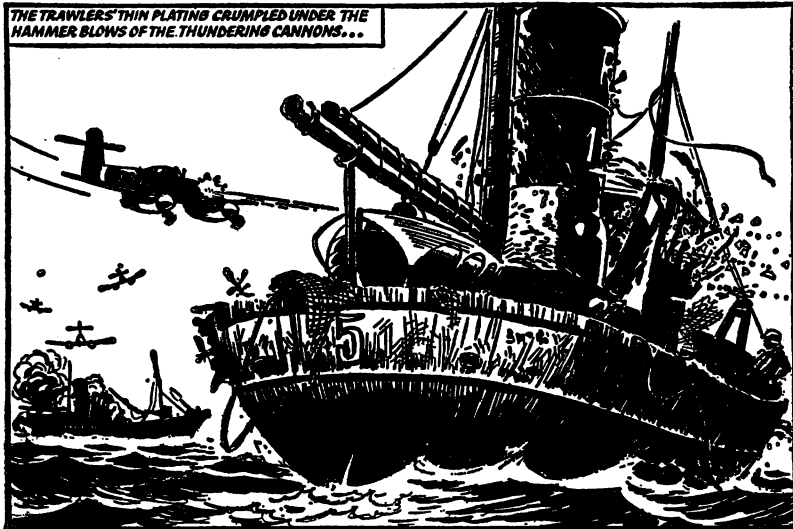
THE GERMAN SAILORS LEAPT TO THEIR GUNS AS THE WINGED DEMONS CAME SCREAMING DOWN OUT OF THE SKY.



THE LONG HOURS OF TRAINING PAID OFF. THE BOMBS CRASHED HOME AND TWO OF THE TRAWLERS VANISHED IN VOLCANOES OF ROARING FLAME. THE OTHERS REELED FROM NEAR MISSES.

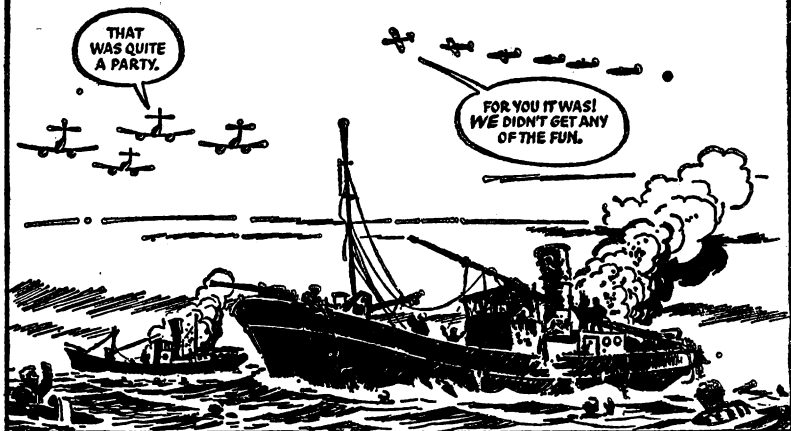


THE TRAWLERS' THIN PLATING CRUMPLED UNDER THE HAMMER BLOWS OF THE THUNDERING CANNONS...



Whirlwind In The Sky

MISSION SUCCESSFUL! TWO SHIPS SUNK, THE OTHER TWO BADLY DAMAGED AND USELESS FOR MONTHS TO COME. FOR A "TRIAL RUN" IT HAD EXCEEDED ALL EXPECTATIONS.

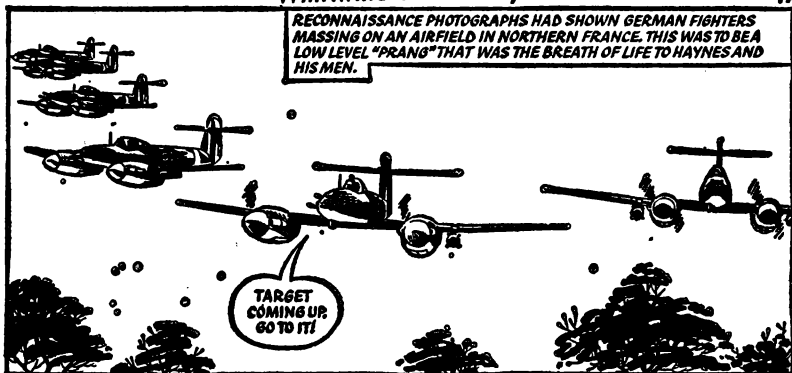


AFTER SUCH A CONVINCING DEMONSTRATION, THE WHIRLBOMBERS WERE IN CONSTANT DEMAND FOR LOW LEVEL STRIKES.

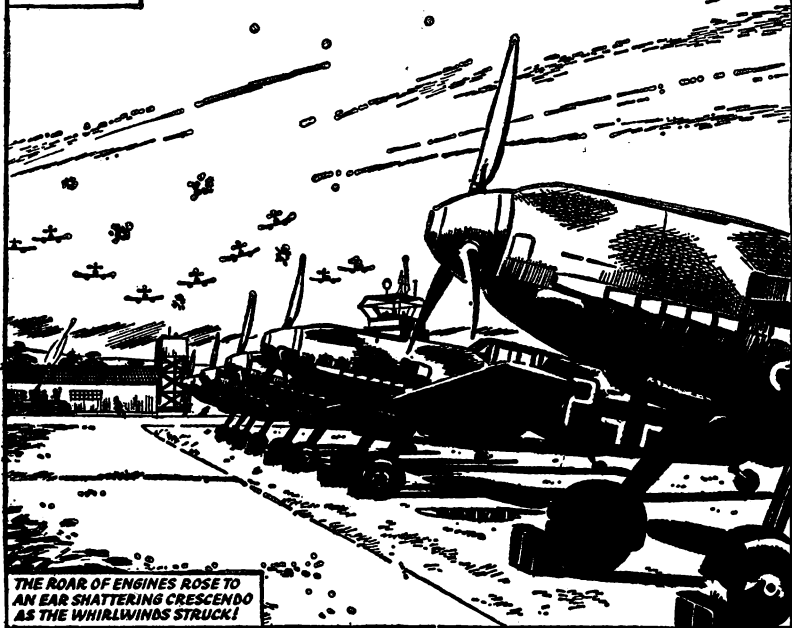


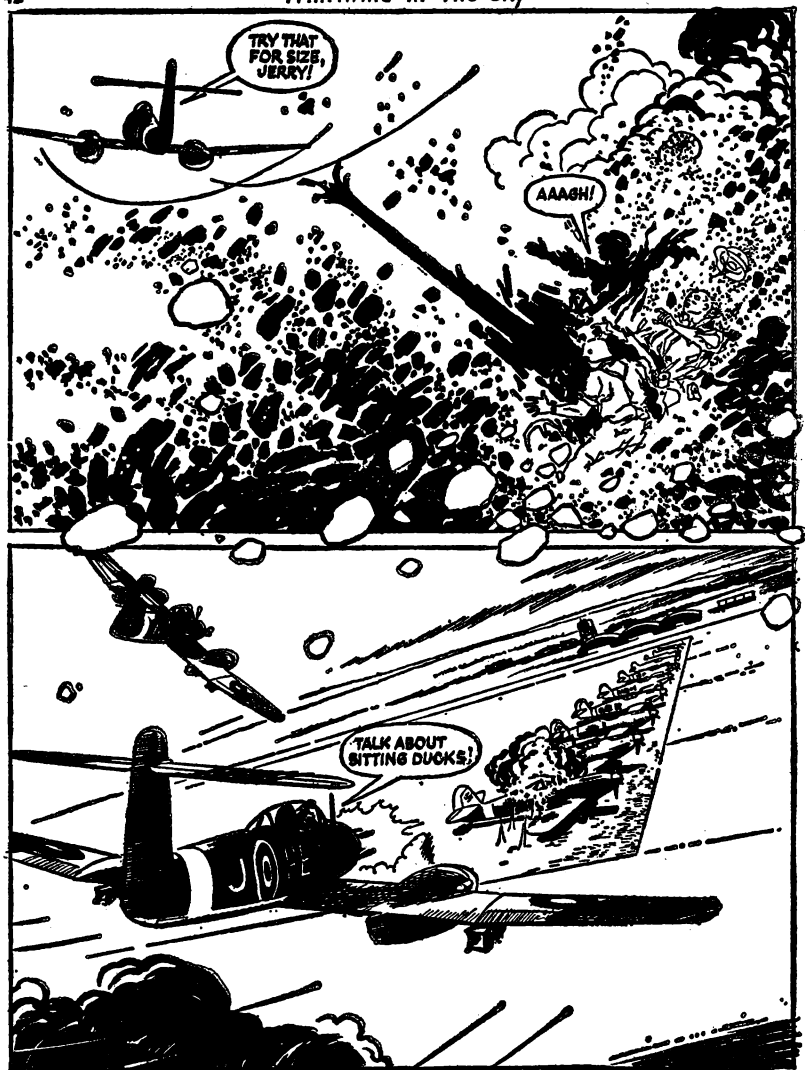
Whirlwind In The Sky

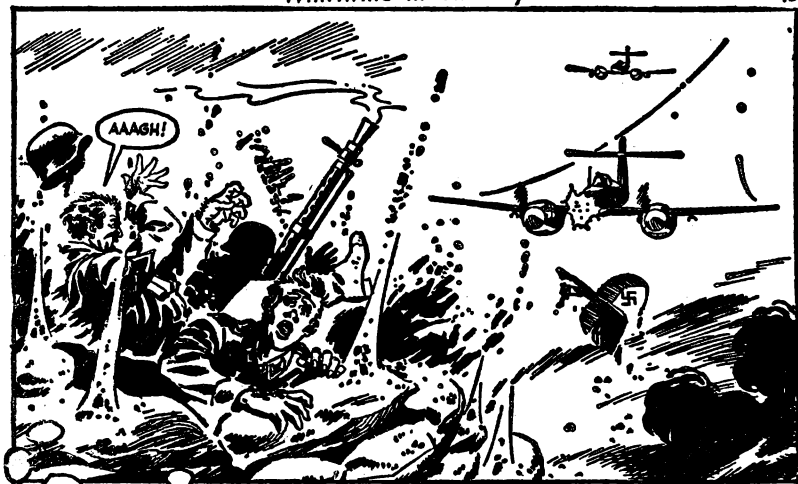
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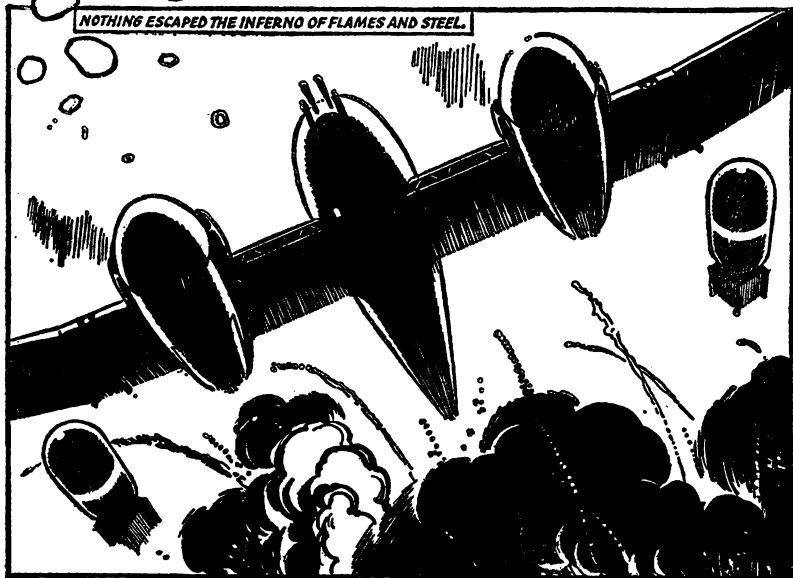
WITH PRACTISED SKILL THE ATTACKERS FANNED OUT. TWO SECTIONS WENT TO SILENCE THE FLAK EMPLACEMENTS, LEAVING THE REST UNHAMPERED TO BOMB AND BLAST THE AIRCRAFT AND INSTALLATIONS.







NOTHING ESCAPED THE INFERNO OF FLAMES AND STEEL.





SOME DARING GERMAN PILOTS TRIED TO TAKE OFF TO GIVE BATTLE, BUT WERE MERCILESSLY BLASTED OUT OF EXISTENCE BEFORE THEY COULD GET AIRBORNE.



RELENTLESSLY THE WHIRLWINDS RAGED UP AND DOWN, UNTIL NOTHING WAS LEFT BUT BURNING AIRCRAFT AND GUTTED BUILDINGS.

RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH. REFORM AND LET'S GET OUT BEFORE HALF THE LUFTWAFFE LANDS ON OUR NECKS.



SO THE WHIRLWINDS PASSED ON, LEAVING DEVASTATION BEHIND THEM!

NEVER WAS AN AIRCRAFT MORE APTLY NAMED!

Chapter 3. WHIRLIBOMBER'S MOON

THEN CAME THE NIGHT OF THE
FULL MOON... A BOMBER'S MOON.
WHIRLIBOMBER'S MOON!



THAT NIGHT, THE WHIRLWINDS WERE[®] WORKING ON THE RAILROAD.
HARRASSED RELENTLESSLY BY DAY, THE GERMANS NOW TRIED TO MOVE
THEIR SUPPLIES AND AMMUNITION UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS.



Whirlwind In The Sky

47

THE RAILWAYS WERE EASY TO LOCATE, THE LINES REFLECTING THE MOONLIGHT, MAKING THEM STAND OUT LIKE A SILVER THREAD AGAINST THE EARTH'S VELVET BACKCLOTH.

NOW ALL
WE CAN DO
IS WAIT!



HAYNES CRUISED SLOWLY IN CIRCLES, KEEPING A WARY EYE OPEN FOR NIGHT FIGHTERS, AND WATCHING FOR THE TELL-TALE PUFF OF SMOKE.

AH!
A CUSTOMER...
AT LAST!



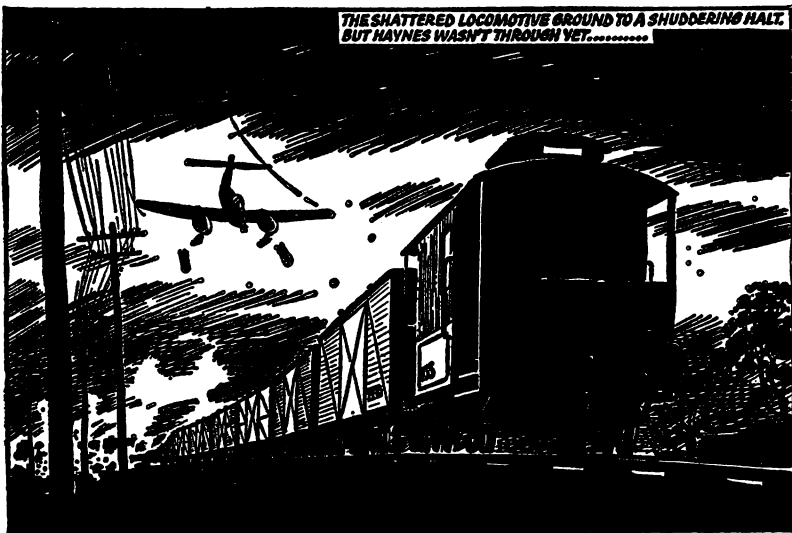
Whirlwind In The Sky

DEAFENED BY THE CLATTER OF WHEELS, THE HAPLESS TRAIN CREW'S FIRST INKLING THAT THEY WERE UNDER ATTACK WAS THE SMASHING IMPACT AS THE CANNON SHELLS SLAMMED INTO THE BOILER.

BLITZEN!
AT NIGHT AS WELL!
IS NOWHERE SAFE!



THE SHATTERED LOCOMOTIVE GROUND TO A SHUDDERING HALT,
BUT HAYNES WASN'T THROUGH YET.....



WITH A FLASH THAT TURNED
NIGHT INTO DAY AND A ROAR
THAT NEAR SHATTERED THE
EARDRUMS, THE TRAIN
VANISHED IN A FLAMING
HOLOCAUST. HAYNES HAD
HIT THE JACKPOT.....
AMMUNITION!



STUNNED AND DEAFENED, HAYNES FOUGHT THE CONTROLS AS THE BLAST HURLED HIS AIRCRAFT ABOUT LIKE A DEAD LEAF.

MY STARS, WHAT A MESS!
THAT SHOULD ATTRACT
SOME ATTENTION!



HAYNES GUESSED RIGHT. A NIGHT FIGHTER, ATTRACTED BY THE INFERNO, CAME HOT FOOT TO THE SCENE OF THE DISASTER.

KEEP YOUR
EYES OPEN, KURT,
THOUGH I EXPECT
THE BRITISHER HAS
GONE SCURRYING
HOME BY NOW.

MORE
THAN
LIKELY!



HAYNES, HUGGING THE GROUND WHERE HIS SILHOUETTE MERGED INTO THE PITCH BLACK SHADOWS, WATCHED THE GERMAN COME SNIFFING CAUTIOUSLY ROUND THE EDGE OF THE FLAMES.

THEY'RE
ASKING FOR
TROUBLE...
AND BY HECK,
THEY'LL GET
IT!



SHELLS SCYTHED THROUGH THE NIGHT SKY,
AND THE LUCKLESS MESSERSCHMITT
ADDED ITS SHATTERED HULK TO THE
HUNGRY BLAZE BELOW.



I THINK THAT'S
ENOUGH FOR
ONE NIGHT.



Chapter 4. The FAREWELL FLIGHT

SO THE MONTHS ROLLED BY, AND THE SCORE STEADILY MOUNTED. TRAINS, ROAD TRANSPORT AND AIRFIELDS WERE DESTROYED UNTIL THE GERMANS WENT IN TERROR OF THE SUM, HARD-HITTING WHIRLWINDS.



BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER SIDE TO THE STORY. THE WHIRLWIND WAS STILL DOGGED BY ITS TEMPERAMENTAL ENGINES AND COMPLICATED SYSTEMS. THE MECHANICS SWEATED BLOOD TRYING TO KEEP THEM SERVICEABLE.

HOW'S IT GOING?
IT'S A MAXIMUM
EFFORT SHOW
TOMORROW.

HAVE A
HEART, CHIEFY.
THESE THINGS ARE
LIKE A FLAMIN'
CHINESE PUZZLE.

THIS WAS KNOWN AT
COMMAND LEVEL,
AND ONE DAY THE
BLOW FELL.....

WELL, THERE IT IS. MINISTRY HAS DECREED THAT THE WHIRLWIND BE WITHDRAWN BECAUSE, IN THEIR OWN WORDS: "THE FUSELAGE IS TOO SMALL AND ITS ENTIRE LAYOUT UNPROMISING," AND ROLLS-ROYCE WANT TO BE FREE TO CONCENTRATE ON THE MERLIN ENGINE AND ABANDON THE PEREGRINE. WE INTEND TO RE-EQUIP WITH MOSQUITOES.

THIS WILL
BREAK YOUNG
HAYNES' HEART.
HE'S BARMY ABOUT
WHIRLWINDS!



Whirlwind In The Sky



THEY WERE EXCITED OVER GETTING THE MOSQUITO, DE HAVILLANDS' NEW SABRE TOOTHED GREYHOUND, BUT A LITTLE SAD AT LOSING THEIR TRUSTY, THOUGH OFTEN EXASPERATING, WHIRLWINDS.



PITY TO PART WITH THE OLD BUSES, THOUGH THE ERKS WILL BE PLEASED.

WHEN IS THE CHANGE TO TAKE EFFECT, SKIPPER?

DELIVERY PILOTS ARE TO TAKE AWAY THE OLD AIRCRAFT IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO. THEN WE SHALL BE BUSY CONVERTING TO THE MOSSIES AND CROWING UP WITH THE NAVIGATORS.

THE NAVIGATORS BEGAN TO ARRIVE, AND WERE MADE WELCOME. MEANWHILE THE WHIRLWINDS WERE Dwindling AS TRANSPORT PILOTS TOOK THEM AWAY TO THE AIRCRAFT POOL.



THAT'S NEARLY THE LAST. WISH THEY'D HURRY UP WITH THE MOSSIES.

YES, WHAT IS IT?

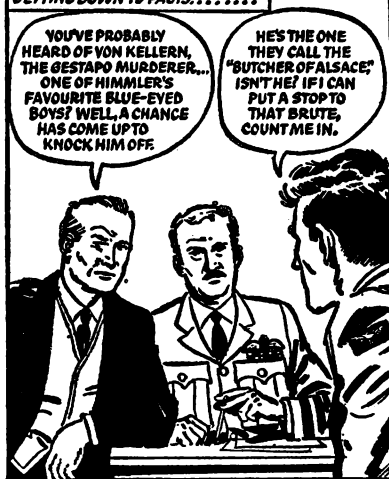
THERE'S A CAR WAITING TO TAKE YOU TO GROUP HEADQUARTERS, SIR. THE DRIVER SAYS IT'S URGENT!

Whirlwind In The Sky

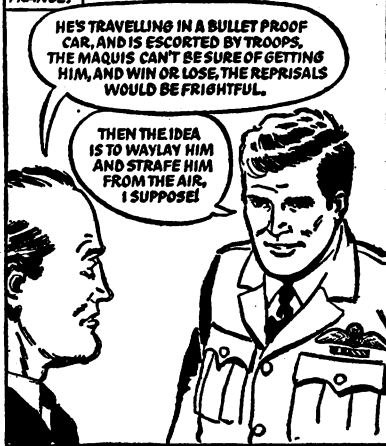
MYSTIFIED, HAYNES WAS WHISKED TO GROUP HEADQUARTERS, AND USHERED INTO A GUARDED OFFICE.

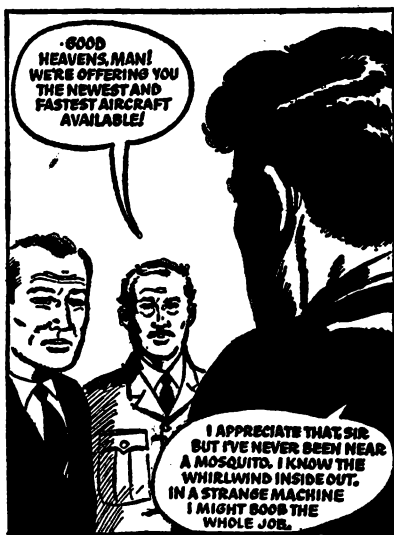


THE CIVILIAN PROVED TO BE FROM CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, AND WASTED NO TIME IN GETTING DOWN TO FACTS.....



THE INTELLIGENCE MAN WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT VON KELLERN, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TORTURE AND MURDER OF THOUSANDS OF FRENCH CITIZENS, WAS ON A TOUR OF HIS "FIELD OFFICES" IN NORTHERN FRANCE.





Whirlwind In The Sky

THE AIR MARSHAL COULD NOT FAIL TO SEE THE WISDOM OF THAT STATEMENT. SOON THE BRIEFING WAS COMPLETE.

I'LL ARRANGE FOR YOUR WHIRLWIND TO BE RETAINED FOR THIS ONE OPERATION. I'LL BE THERE TO MEET YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK.

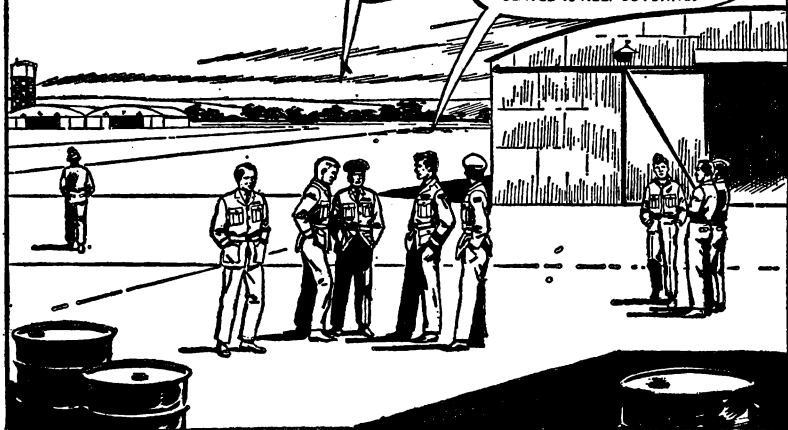
THANK YOU, SIR. I WON'T FAIL YOU.

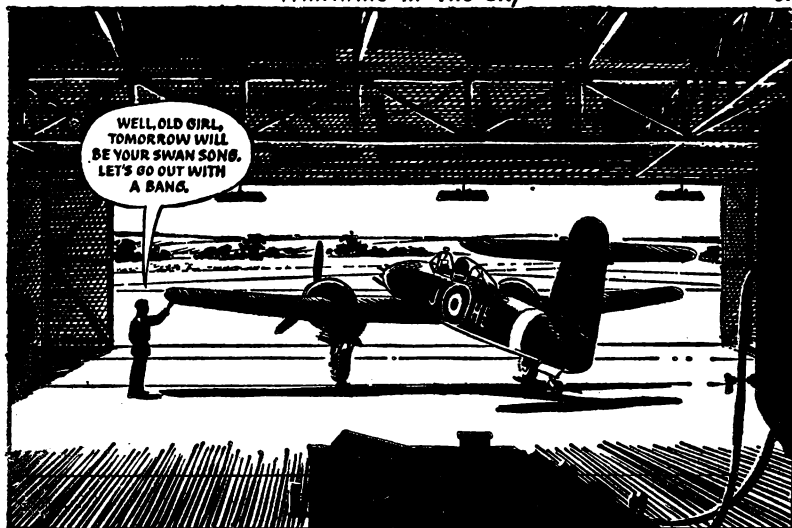


WHEN HE GOT BACK TO EXETER, HAYNES FOUND THE AIRFIELD SILENT AND EMPTY, AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW MOSQUITO AIRCRAFT.

IT'S EERIE, SOMEHOW, WITHOUT ANY PLANES.

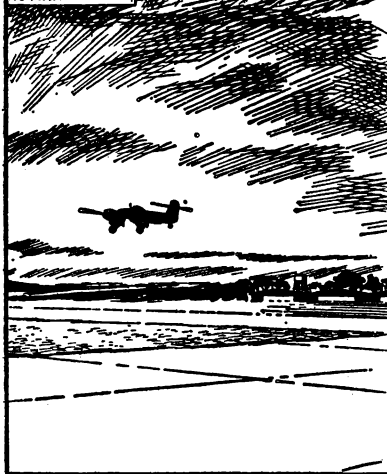
AT LEAST THE ERKS ARE GETTING A BREATHER. THEY'VE ALL GONE INTO TOWN. THEY DESERVE A BREAK AFTER THE WAY THEY'VE SLAVED TO KEEP US FLYING.



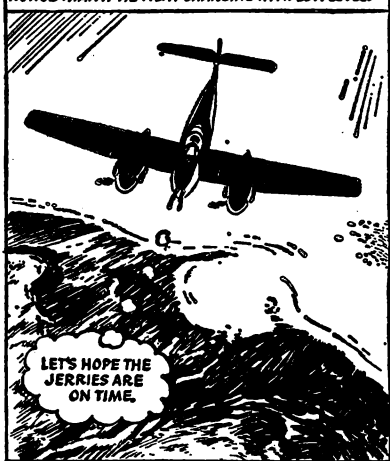


WELL, OLD GIRL,
TOMORROW WILL
BE YOUR SWAN SONG.
LET'S GO OUT WITH
A BANG.

THE EASTERN SKY WAS TURNING FROM RED TO GOLD AS
NEXT MORNING THE LONE WHIRLWIND TOOK WING ON
ITS FINAL SORTIE.

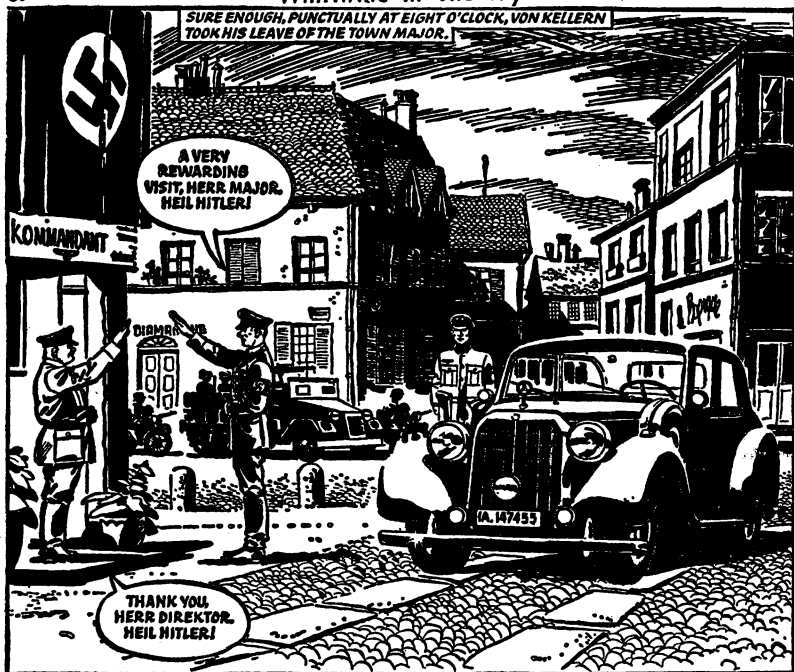


HAYNES HELD A STEADY CLIMB TO THIRTY THOUSAND
FEET. HE INTENDED CROSSING THE ENEMY COAST AT
EXTREME HEIGHT. THAT WAY HE WOULD ATTRACT LESS
NOTICE THAN IF HE WENT CHARGING IN AT LOW LEVEL.



LET'S HOPE THE
JERRIES ARE
ON TIME.

Whirlwind In The Sky



HIGH ABOVE THE SUNLIT HIGHWAY CIRCLED HAYNES, WAITING LIKE A HAWK TO POUNCE ON HIS PREY.

SHOULDN'T
BE LONG NOW

RIGHT ON TIME.
THANK HEAVENS
FOR GERMAN
THOROUGHNESS.

BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF THE MENACE LURKING
IN THE SKY, VON KELLERN WAS ENJOYING THE RIDE.

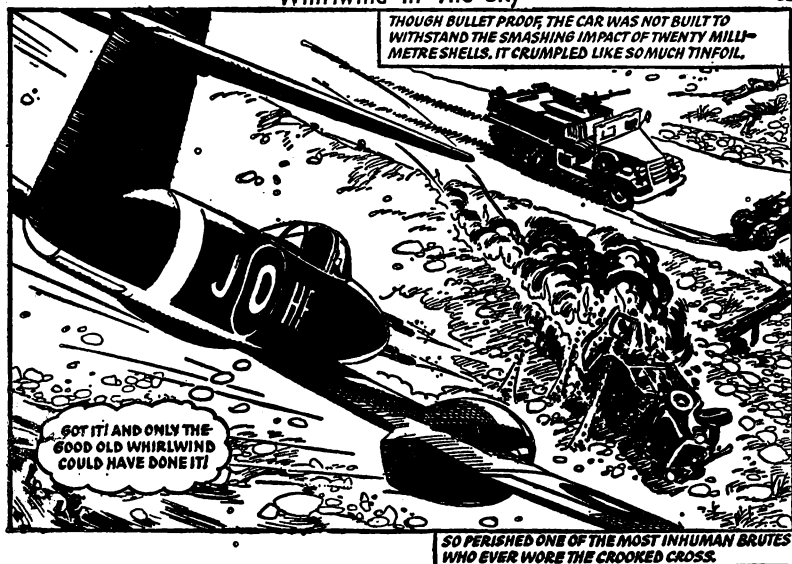
A BEAUTIFUL
MORNING, KLAUS.
THE WAR SEEMS
FAR AWAY.

JA, HERR
DIREKTOR.

Whirlwind In The Sky

HARDLY HAD HE SPOKEN WHEN HAYNES OPENED FIRE!





Whirlwind In The Sky

THOUSANDS OF INNOCENT MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE AVENGED.

THAT'LL SHOW
THE FRENCH WE
HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN
THEM.



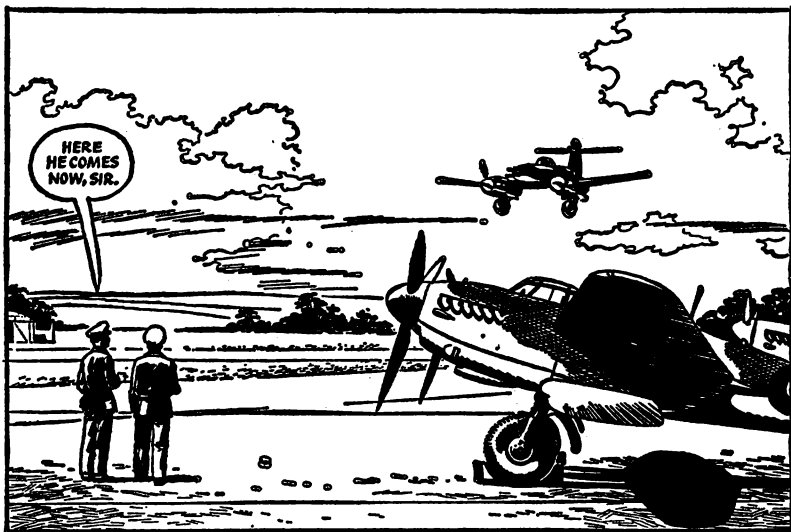
THE WHIRLWIND FLEW PROUDLY ON ITS LAST JOURNEY HOME, LEAVING AN ENEMY WHO HAD LEARNED TO KNOW ITS SLENDER OUTLINE, AND TO FEAR IT!

WONDER
WHAT HE'S BEEN
UP TO!

MAKING LIFE
MISERABLE FOR
SOME POOR JERK?
I'LL BET.



HERE
HE COMES
NOW, SIR.



TYRES WHINED ON THE RUNWAY, AND THE LAST WHIRLWIND TOUCHED DOWN, EVEN ITS TRIM SHAPE LOOKING UNGAINLY AGAINST THE LEAN, SMOOTH FLANKED MOSQUITOES.

WHAT BEAULTS,
WONDER WHICH
ONE'S MINE?



WELL,
HAYNES?

MISSION
SUCCESSFUL,
SIR.

EXCELLENT,
NOW COME
AND LOOK AT
YOUR NEW
AIRCRAFT!



THE SHOW WAS OVER, THE FINAL CURTAIN HAD COME DOWN ON THE WHIRLWIND STORY, BUT THIS CONTROVERSIAL AIRCRAFT HAD ACQUITTED ITSELF WELL, AND MANY VALUABLE LESSONS HAD BEEN LEARNED.....



ASK ANY OF THE PILOTS AND HIS EYES WILL KINDLE AS HE RECALLS THE NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN THRILL OF BEING BORNE ALOFT IN THAT REAL PILOT'S AIRCRAFT, THE WESTLAND WHIRLWIND!

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